

The Willis Green House
Hanover
Morris County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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^{Willis}
The Calvin Green House
Hanover
Morris County, New Jersey

Owners: Willis F. Green, Ella E. Nordt, Laura M. Dorer,
Julia C. Adams and Emma J. Green

Occupants: Miss Frances Osborne and Mrs. Barberry

Date of Erection: About 1786

Architect: Unknown

Builder: (Original owner) Calvin Green* (1765-1847)

Present Condition: Original except front porch, rear
shed and roofing

Number of Stories: One and one-half over cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry
Exterior walls - timber frame clapboarded
Interior walls - frame partitions plastered
Chimneys - brick, built into inside of
gable end walls on ridge line
Roof - gable, covered with modern asphalt
shingles

Historical Data:

The identity of this well proportioned house
of late 18th century design local to Morris County is

*(Footnote) Mrs. George Dorer of 25 Fairfield Avenue,
West Caldwell, Essex County, a great granddaughter of
Calvin Green, writes under date of 5 October 1940 that
he built the house in 1791 and occupied it. But a previous
date is more likely, since he was described as living on
the place on 23 April 1790, the date of his father's will
in which the 80 acres "with all the buildings" was devised
to him. Calvin Green, furthermore, came of age in 1786 and
was married then or before 1788 in which latter year his
daughter is of record as baptized. Probably his father had
the house erected for him. It stands next south of the
former's parsonage, on the highway now No. 14 of the County
Road system.

discovered by search of title in the land and probate records, reported as follows:

By his will dated 23 April 1790 and proved 17 June next, Jacob Green^(a) of Hanover, Morris County, devised "to my son Calvin the place on which he now lives, the bounds of which shall be as follows: Beginning at the southwest corner of a piece of land that said Ellis Cook had of me, thence running South 55 degrees west to the land of William Cook, thence Southeast by the land of said William Cook and the land of Thomas Eckley and of Ezekiel Tucker to the land of Samuel Merry, thence northeast by the land of said Merry and Ellis Cook to the land of John H. Cummings, thence northwest by the land of said Cummings and Ephraim Sayre and the parsonage and another lot of Ellis Cook's unto the first mentioned corner, containing 80 acres, be it more or less, with all the buildings, fences, woods, waters" etc. The will devises also a tract of 50 acres and a two-thirds interest in the saw mill and grist mill on Whippany river, with all the land on which they stood, 18 acres, and 20 acres adjacent, to son Ashbel Green, he paying bequests to other heirs named, 75 acres of willow meadow plantation in Essex County to son Pierson Green and 50 acres thereof to son John W. Green, with provision for his wife and bequest to daughters Dorothy, Elizabeth, and Keturah, and to the children of daughter Abigail deceased.

(a) The Rev. Jacob Green*, pastor of Hanover Presbyterian Church 1746-1790, b. 22 Jan. 1722 at Malden, Mass., graduated Harvard College 1744, mar. 1st in 1747 Ann Strong of Brookhaven, L.I., who d. 25 Nov. 1756, m. 2nd in 1757 Elizabeth Pierson who d. 3 Aug. 1810 in 84th yr. He d. 24 May 1790 aged 68 yrs., bur. in the chyd. Schoolmaster 1774, a trustee of the College of N.J. (Princeton) 1748-64, vice-presdt. of same 1758-59, member of Provincial Congress 1776, author of political and patriotic tracts, medical practitioner 30 yrs. (Proceedings of N.J. Historical Society 2nd series, XII, 191 etc. Inscriptions on tombstones in Whippany and Hanover graveyards, Morris Co., N.J., copies and publ. 1894. Records of Hanover Ch. 1746-96, publ. 1893).

Calvin Green^(b) for whom was built about 1786 the house here considered, devisee of his father, the Rev. Jacob Green of Hanover Presbyterian Church, occupied the same. By his will dated 6 October 1823 and proved 23 February 1847, after making bequests to his wife Hannah, son Jacob and son Gabriel and daughter Elizabeth, he devised "unto my son Willis Green the residue of my real estate whatsoever and wheresoever" with division thereof between his brothers in the event of his death under the age of 21 years.

Willis Green^(c) son and devisee of part of the real estate of Calvin Green abovesaid, thus inherited the homestead and evidently occupied it until his death in 1848 intestate. By a quitclaim deed dated 1 April 1878, his widow Betsey A. Green and daughters Elizabeth, Mary and Elmira W. Green, obtained from his son Jacob Green their share of the real estate, being a 30 acre plot having 366 feet frontage on the northwest side of the road from Hanover to Columbia (now County road no. 14) and a depth of 2390 feet, "Being part of the Homestead farm of Willis Green decd. and descended to him by will from the late Calvin Green" in which deed the property lines are described as beginning in the middle of the

(b) Calvin Green, bapt. in Aug. 1765 in Hanover Presby. Ch., 2nd of the 3 sons of the Rev. Jacob Green and his 2nd wf. Elizabeth Pierson, d. 3 Feb. 1847 in 82d yr. per gravestone in Hanover Chyd.; he mar. Hannah Beach who d. 13 July 1847 in 79th yr., and had issue: Nancy 1788-1812 unm., Gabriel 1794-1848, Willis 1802-48 John G. 1806-7, Elizabeth 1809-38 unm., and Jacob. See references in note (a).

(c) Willis Green d. 21 Mar. 1848 in 46th yr., per gravestone in Hanover, 2nd son of Calvin Green and his wife Hannah Beach. He mar. Betsey A. Woodruff who d. 25 Sept. 1901, and had issue: Jacob, Elizabeth, Mary who d. unm. 16 Feb. 1904, and Elmira W. who mar. James Beach, the son Jacob Green being then deceased.

said road, at the southeast corner of the "Old Parsonage Lot" and 31 links on the road from the "range of the northeast end of the extension of the dwelling house of the late Willis Green" (here surveyed).

By quitclaim deed of the same date the son Jacob Green received a 9.64 acre lot directly across the road as his share of the estate.

Betsey Almira Green of Hanover Township, widow of Willis Green abovesaid, by her will of 6 May 1897 and proved in 1904, devised her property to the three daughters, Elizabeth, Mary and Elmira Green.

The daughter Mary Green died unmarried on 16 February 1904 having devised her estate to her two sisters by her will of 30 April 1897. Finally, by deed of 22 September 1927, Elmira W. Green Beach, the remaining sister, and her husband James Beach, of Hanover Township, Morris County, conveyed to Willis Green of Whippany, and to Ella E. Nordt of East Orange, Essex County, Laura M. Dorer, Julia C. Adams and Emma J. Green of the borough of Caldwell, Essex County, (the grantees being children of her deceased brother Jacob Green) the 30 acre homestead tract at Hanover village described above, reserving to the grantors the right to occupy the same during their lifetime. The five grantees remain as owners at the time of our survey of the house February 10, 1939, and it is occupied by Miss Frances Osborne and Mrs. Barry as tenants.

Reference:

Search of title in the land and probate records of Morris County by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. research editor, now deposited in the office of the Secretary of State and by Thomas J. Riley Jr., abstractor in those at Morristown

Louis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

TW 12/11/60